



## Portland Business Journal on Fish Consumption Study

Deb Yamamoto, Kristine Koch, Sean  
Chip Humphrey to: Sheldrake, Mark Macintyre, Alanna Conley,  
Lori Cohen, Cami Grandinetti, Richard

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Here's the first article - more coming.....

Note - "They plan to release their own toxicity results by January"

## Businesses question EPA over Willamette fish study

Premium content from Portland Business Journal by Andy Giegerich , Business Journal staff writer  
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### Andy Giegerich

Three major Portland waterfront businesses want federal officials to reconsider methodology they're using to determine Portland harbor clean-up options.

At issue is whether the Environmental Protection Agency, which will draft strategies to clean the Willamette River's Superfund site, used relevant data regarding fish consumption.

Any changes in the way Portland harbor fish are studied could lower Superfund clean-up costs. Estimates released earlier this year project the potential figures at up to \$2.2 billion.

The EPA analyzes fish, when gauging potential human health risks, to ascertain contamination levels in the river's north reaches.

Representatives from Gunderson LLC, ScThey plan to release their own toxicity results by January. hntzer Steel Industries Co. and Vigor Industrial LLC contend that the EPA didn't actually interview Willamette River anglers before estimating the degree to which people eat fish caught from the river. Instead, EPA based its estimates on national and tribal fishing data. The three companies fear the EPA is creating clean-up remedies and costs on incomplete data. The companies collected site-specific data from Willamette anglers earlier this year. They plan to release their own toxicity results by January.

The San Francisco-based Brattle Group performed the fish consumption survey, which the companies released yesterday. Gunderson, Schnitzer and Vigor representatives were scheduled to meet with the EPA after the Business Journal went to press.

The Superfund designation requires cleanup of the 10-mile Willamette stretch between the Fremont Bridge and Sauvie Island. The EPA deemed the site hazardous in 2000 because manufacturers polluted the water for decades.

"We couldn't in good conscience watch this proceed without (site-specific) information," said David Harvey, Gunderson's director of health and safety. "This information is being used to inform public outreach on the Superfund process itself. We think our survey moves the ball down the field on understanding fish consumption patterns in the Portland harbor."

Harvey said the three companies want to publish their toxicity findings in a peer-reviewed journal. The Brattle Group worked on the report with Portland State University's Survey Research Lab.

The Lower Willamette Group, which consists of more than 10 riverfront businesses and other interests, had also expressed concerns about the EPA's findings last summer.

Harvey and executives from the two other businesses presented their findings to Rep. Kurt Schrader, an Oregon Democrat, Wednesday morning.

Schrader pointed out that the EPA didn't take into account whether those eating fish caught in or near the Superfund site are eating resident or migratory fish. Resident fish tend to have higher toxicity levels than migratory fish, such as salmon.

"No one wants to delay this, everyone wants it resolved so we can move forward," he said.

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"There's hundreds of millions at stake here. I don't want these companies wasting a bunch of money on mitigation that may not be necessary."

Andy Giegerich covers government, law, health care and sports business.